Manitoba Firearm Accidents Report

Hunting and Non-Hunting 1983

Hunter and Firearm Safety Program

Manitoba
Natural Resources

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Natural Resources would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Municipal Police Forces for providing information for this Firearm Accident Summary. It is through these organizations that detailed information on each firearm accident was obtained.

Prepared by

Maurice A. Comeau

Hunter and Firearm Safety Officer

and

A. J. Campbell

Hunter Safety and Guide Training Co-ordinator

Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Municipal Police Forces requiring additional accident report forms please contact us at 1495 St. James Street, or phone 944-6644.

SUMMARY

In this summary, accidents are recorded in three categories.

(1) Accidents involving a licenced hunter in pursuit of game during an open season.

(2) Accidents involving persons in pursuit of non-game species and illegal hunting. Rabbits and gophers are considered as non-game species.

(3) Non-hunting accidents.

During the 1983 calendar year 20 persons suffered injuries due to careless handling of firearms. Ten of these were self inflicted. Five were fatal. The 20 accidents recorded was the same number as recorded last year which was the lowest since the Program began in 1964.

The average age of shooters causing accidents in 1983 was 27.6 years. This was almost identical to the average age in 1982 which was 27.4.

In 8 of the accidents the shooter was hunting some type of bird or animal. 5 of these involved a licenced hunter in pursuit of game during an open season.

As in past years the majority of the accidents occurred at a distance of less than 10 yards. 13 of the 20 accidents occurred at this distance.

3,315 students were certified in 1983. Manitoba Volunteer Instructors have now trained 90,563 students since the Program began in 1964.

Nine graduates of a Hunter Safety Program were involved in the 20 recorded accidents in 1983. This makes a total of 101 to have accidents since the Program began in 1964. This is eleven one hundredths of one percent of the total students trained.

Since hunter orange became mandatory in 1969 for big game hunting there have been 4 hunters mistaken for game during legal shooting hours involving hunters that were properly dressed. Two of these were during the 1983 season.

CAUSE OF ACCIDENTS

	1982	1983
Victim out of sight of shooter.	2	2
Victim moved into line of fire.	0	0
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game.	2	1
Victim mistaken for game.	1	2
Shooter stumbled and fell.	1	0
Using firearm as club.	0	0
Trigger caught on bush or other object.	3	3
Loaded firearm in vehicle.	2	2
Firearm fell from insecure rest.	1	0
"Horseplay" and/or "didn't know it was loaded".	2	4
Crossing fence or other obstacle with loaded firearm.	0	0
Loading.	0	0
Unloading.	1	1
Defective firearm.	0	0
Loaded firearm in the home.	1	4
Accidental discharge.	2	0
Ricochet.	2	1
Unknown.	0	0
	20	20

SYNPOSIS OF 1983 FIREARM ACCIDENTS

AS COMPARED TO 1982

	1982	1983
Total Number of Accidents	20	20
Fatal	1	5
Non-Fatal	19	15
Hunting Legally During Regular Season	7	5
Fatal	0	1
Non-Fatal	7	4
Hunting Small Animals, Birds, or Illegally Hunting	6	3
Fatal	0	1
Non-Fatal	6	2
Non-Hunting Accidents	7	12
Fatal in the home	0	2
Fatal in a vehicle	0	0
Fatal outside home	1	1
Non-Fatal in the home	1	3
Non-Fatal outside the home	5	6
Shooter Unknown	0	1
Fatal	0	0
Non-Fatal	0	1
Accidents Involving Shooter 18 years and Under	6	7
All Types of Hunting	5	2
Fatal	0	0
Non-Fatal	5	2
Non-Hunting	1	5
Fatal	0	2
Non-Fatal	1	3

There were 15 accidents involving Treaty Indians, the same number as in 1982. Treaty Indians are not required to obtain a licence to hunt and therefore, are not required to take the Hunter Safety Training and are not included in this accident summary. There were 3 fatalities.

TYPE OF FIREARM INVOLVED

	1982	1983
.22 calibre Rim Fire Rifle	7	8
Fatal	0	1
Non-Fatal	7	7
Centre Fire Hi Power Rifle	6	6
Fatal	0	3
Non-Fatal	6	3
Shotgun	6	5
Fatal	0	0
Non-Fatal	6	5
Hand Gun	1	1
Fatal	1	1
Non-Fatal	0	0
Pellet Gun	0	0
Fatal	0	0
Non-Fatal	0	0
Unknown	0	0
Fatal	0	0
Non-Fatal	0	0

DISTANCE OF VICTIM FROM SHOOTER

0 to 10 yards	13	13
10 to 50 yards	2	1
50 to 100 yards	4	3
over 100 yards	1	2
Distance unknown	0	1

OCCURRENCES

* Indicates Fatals

Time of Day	1982	1983
Midnight - 3:00 a.m.	0	2 **
3:00 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.	0	0
6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	2	2 *
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon	4	0
12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.	6	5 *
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	5	6 *
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.	1	3
9:00 p.m. - 12:00 midnight	2	2
Unknown	0	0

By Day

Sunday	3	3 **
Monday	1	2
Tuesday	3	1 *
Wednesday	6	1
Thursday	1	4
Friday	3	6 **
Saturday	3	3

By Month

January	1	0
February	1	2 **
March	3	0
April	1	0
May	3	0
June	0	1
July	1	1
August	1	3
September	4	3 *
October	1	6 *
November	4	3 *
December	0	1

DATE AND TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	CIRCUMSTANCES
Feb. 8 Tuesday 7:30 a.m.	27	yes	no	308 cal rifle	50-100 yds.	Elk	Shooter was walking a cut line and stumbled, discharging his firearm. The victim who was 50-100 yds. down the line was struck in the head. Victim was wearing white coveralls and hunter orange hat.
Feb. 11 Friday 1:45 a.m.	26	yes	yes	22 cal handgun	0-100 yds.	non-hunting	Victim was playing Russian Roulette.
June 5 Sunday 3:00 p.m.	unknown	no	no	22 cal rifle	unknown	unknown	The victim and his companions were fishing from a river bank. They heard shots being fired over their heads. They yelled at the shooter to stop and the shooting stopped for a short while. The shooting started again and the victim was struck in the leg by a bullet.
July 28 Thursday 11:53 p.m.	17	no	yes	410 shotgun	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	Accident occurred in the victim's bedroom. Victim noted that the hammer was at half cock but was unable to release it. He accidently dropped the firearm on the floor and it discharged into his abdomen.

DATE AND TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	CIRCUMSTANCES
September 12 Monday 6:45 a.m.	30	no	no	12 gauge shotgun	50-100 yds.	ducks	The shooter swung around on some ducks and fired. The victim who was standing in some tall reeds was struck on the head by three pellets.
September 19 Monday 8:30 p.m.	60	no	no	12 gauge shotgun	100 yds. or more	ducks	The accident occurred as both parties were hunting in canoes on opposite sides of a pond surrounded by reeds. The victim was hit by several pellets as a result of the shooter swinging on some ducks thinking he was clear of the victim's canoe.
October 7 Friday 4:45 p.m.	22	no	yes	30-30 cal rifle	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The shooter shot himself in the foot while unloading his 30-30 cal. rifle.
October 14 Friday 7:00 p.m.	37	no	no	12 gauge shotgun	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	Loaded firearm was put in ½ ton truck with muzzle pointing out towards the back window. Victim was standing on some wood in the back of the truck when it discharged. She was hit in the right leg.

DATE AND TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	CIRCUMSTANCES
August 10 Wednesday 7:05 p.m.	45	no	yes	22 cal rifle	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	Accident occurred in a trapper's cabin. He was placing the rifle on the floor with the butt first and the rifle discharged. He was struck by a bullet through the upper part of his arm.
August 13 Saturday 7:30 p.m.	18	no	yes	22 cal rifle	0-10 yds.	gophers	The victim was walking with his firearm in his left hand. The rifle discharged striking him in the left foot.
August 27 Saturday 2:30 p.m.	23	no	no	22 cal rifle	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The shooter was removing the rifle from a boat when it discharged. The victim was hit in the calf of his leg.
September 4 Sunday 1:30 a.m.	17	yes	yes	308 cal rifle	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The victim placed a loaded rifle under his chin thinking the safety was on. The rifle discharged killing him instantly. This occurred at his residence in the presence of five of his friends.

DATE AND TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	CIRCUMSTANCES
October 20 Thursday 1:45 p.m.	17	no	no	22 cal. rifle	10-50 yds.	non-hunting	The victim and the shooter were seeing how close they could shoot at the other's foot. The shooter hit the victim's gun stock and the ricochet struck the victim in the thigh.
October 21 Friday 4:35 p.m.	12	no	yes	b.b.gun	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The shooter was playing with 22 cal cartridges and a b.b.gun. It appears a b.b. set off a 22 cartridge and the victim was hit a glancing blow just above the right ear causing a superficial wound.
October 23 Sunday 1:00 p.m.	14	yes	no	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The shooter turned around to answer a question from the victim. The rifle discharged from the waist striking the victim in the chest.
October 28 Friday 1:00 p.m.	52	no	yes	12 gauge shotgun	0-10 yds.	ducks	Shooter was walking towards a pond when some ducks flew up. He shot at the ducks and was struck in the eye by what is believed to be a ricochetted pellet.

DATE AND TIME	AGE OF SHOOTER	FATAL	SELF-INFLICTED	FIREARM	MUZZLE DISTANCE	GAME HUNTED	CIRCUMSTANCES
November 11 Friday 4:15 p.m.	46	yes	no	308 cal. rifle	100 or more yds.	unknown	The victim who was dressed in dark clothing, was shot while walking through an open grass meadow from a distance of approximately 100 yds. The sun was just setting. The shooter saw movement and fired at the victim striking him in the chest.
November 17 Thursday 2:00 p.m.	16	no	no	308 cal. rifle	50-100 yds.	deer	Victim was deer hunting and was wearing white clothing. His partner knew the whereabouts of the party but heard a rustle and saw a flash of white to his left and shot at it. The victim was hit at the top of the left foot.
November 26 Saturday 3:15 p.m.	20	no	yes	22 cal. rifle	0-10 yds.	rabbits	The shooter stated he was playing with the trigger and had the muzzle pointed down. He squeezed the trigger too hard and the rifle discharged striking his toe.
December 29	26	no	yes	30-30 cal.	0-10 yds.	non-hunting	The victim was cleaning his 30-30 cal. lever action rifle. He had worked the action several times but hadn't checked to see if it was loaded. While cleaning it, the rifle discharged striking him in the finger.

POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL